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# Illegal travellers to stay for Christmas

## Councillor quits in row over expenses

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HUNDREDS of travellers illegally camped in Wickford and Crays Hill are staying for Christmas, it has emerged.

Basildon Council says it will not have finished hiring bailiffs until the end of December.

Tony Ball, council leader, said: "It is possible it could be sooner but we expect to finish the process by the end of the year."

This means it is unlikely there will be any evictions at Dale Farm or Hovefields until the new year, which rules out the travellers taking their

- Bailiffs still being recruited for eviction
- Hiring process will last to the end of December

case to the European Court of Human Rights.

There is a November deadline for this to happen, and they have already said they will only do it if the council proceeds with eviction.

David McPherson-Davis, a Ramsden Crays parish councillor, said he did not believe there would be an eviction until spring at the earliest.

Meanwhile, the travellers are con-

tinuing to try to find alternative sites.

Campaigner Grattan Puxon said they had suggested four sites in Essex, two near Basildon, on the market for around £750,000 each, as possibilities to the council.

He said: "This would be less than the cost of an eviction."

They also continue to campaign against eviction with human rights groups from as far away as Hong Kong joining a campaign to pressure the council to call it off.

Dale Farm was also raised during the Law Society-sponsored Human Rights Symposium held at Essex University, in Colchester, on Saturday.

gage services". It had risen to £1,415 a month by 2007/08.

Association stalwart councillor Frank Tomlin said he was disappointed Mr Dornan had resigned.

He said: "I am disappointed he saw fit to resign, it was to do with a range of things."

"Mr Baggott said he has been through the whole lot with John Baron and told me, as far as he is concerned, he is

**PUB MAKES IT A DOUBLE AT AWARDS SESSION**